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I-15 bridge move completed ahead of schedule

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Snowy skies didn't slow the overnight placement of a 354-foot long bridge across Interstate 15 in American Fork.

Workers actually finished ahead of schedule, reopening a closed section of I-15 at 7 a.m., three hours sooner than expected, according to the Utah Department of Transportation.

The 3.8-million-pound Sam White Bridge is the longest two-span bridge ever moved by Self-Propelled Modular Transporters (SPMTs) in the Western Hemisphere, says UDOT. The bridge is one of 59 that will be built, modified or rebuilt as part of the \$1.7 billion Utah County I-15 Corridor Expansion (I-15 CORE), reconstruction of 24 miles of freeway from Lehi to Spanish Fork.

More than 1,000 people showed up to watch the move, including federal officials and transportation industry professionals from as far away as China, said UDOT spokeswoman Heather Barnum.

Two sets of SPMTs — hydraulic jacks on wheels, controlled by a single joystick — were used to lift the structure 21 feet in the air. The bridge was then moved from the "bridge farm" where it was constructed on the east side of I-15 across eight freeway lanes (approximately 500 feet) and lowered into place.

The technology eliminated the need for 10 full freeway closures, keeping the economy, commuters, goods and services moving, said project director Dal Hawks.

The bridge, named for a landowner who had a 160-acre homestead in Pleasant Grove, is expected to open in mid-May.

The CORE project is about 30 percent complete and on schedule for a December 2012 deadline, say UDOT officials. For more details on the move, go to udot.utah.gov/i15core/bridge.



Djamila Grossman | The Salt Lake Tribune The Sam White Bridge is being moved into place on I-15 at American Fork on Saturday, March 26, 2011. It is the longest two-span bridge ever moved on wheels - Self-Propelled Modular Transporters - in the western hemisphere.

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